

**SUPERIOR COURT OF ARIZONA IN MARICOPA COUNTY**  
**Family Court Department Notice**  
**Notice about “Returns”/Conferences in Commissioners’ Courts**

Approved July 1, 1997/Revised June 9, 1998

This notice applies to **all** proceedings and must be served with the **“Order to Show Cause”** and/or **“Order to Appear”** (except in IV-D child support cases by DES/DCSE)

**GENERAL INFORMATION:** Due to an increase in demand for time on commissioner calendars, as well as the reduction in resources available, the Family Court commissioners will set EVERY **“Petition for Temporary Orders”** and other requests for evidentiary hearings for a 15 minute “return”/status conference before setting a hearing.

**REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO THE RETURN:** The attached **“Order to Appear”/“Order to Show Cause”** is a return only. Here is what the parties and attorneys must know about the return/status conference:

1. **Documents:** Not later than 3 judicial days before the date of the return, the parties shall exchange current, complete, and verified **“Affidavits of Financial Information,”** along with supporting documents. Failure to do so may result in sanctions.
2. **Failure to Appear:** This is a 15 minute proceeding with the court. The court will determine if more time is needed. All parties, whether represented by attorneys or not, must be present. If there is a failure to appear, the court may make such orders as are just, including granting the relief requested by the party who does appear.
3. **Conduct of Return/Status Conference:** If both parties appear, they must be prepared to advise the court of the issues resolved, as well as the issues which remain disputed. Each party shall be prepared to state his or her position on each issue. The court may schedule discovery, disclosure and any other matter necessary to assist the litigants at the subsequent hearing. The court may also enter an Order as to scope and duration of the hearing, including witnesses and documents which may be offered at hearing.
4. **Ability to Schedule Further Proceedings:** Parties and counsel attending the return/ status conference shall have in their possession a schedule of their availability. They shall be prepared to advise the court of any periods of non-availability in the six weeks after the return date.
5. **Duty to Meet Prior to Return:** Except where a party has obtained an **“Order of Protection”** or other Order of the court prohibiting contact, the parties shall meet and confer at least 24 hours prior to the return. In cases where an attorney has been retained, the attorney shall make a reasonable effort to meet with and confer with the opponent at least 24 hours prior to the return.

**WARNING.** All litigants and counsel are cautioned that failure to notify the court of settlement in a timely manner may result in the imposition of sanctions.